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FM AMCONSUL JEDDAH  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9195  
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 1401  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 1479  
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH PRIORITY 6527  
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY 4500  
RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY 2709  
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L JEDDAH 000387

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RIYADH, PLEASE PASS TO DHAHRAN; PARIS FOR ZEYA; LONDON FOR  
TSOU; DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ARP AND NEA/RA; NSC FOR FARAH

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/23/2016  
TAGS: [ECON](#) [IS](#) [KISL](#) [KPAL](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SA](#)  
SUBJECT: OIC OFFICIAL: LIBYANS AND SYRIANS BEHIND FEEBLE  
ATTEMPT TO REJUVENATE BOYCOTT OFFICE

REF: A. JEDDAH 236

[1](#)B. JEDDAH 366

Classified By: Hector Morales for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) In a May 23 discussion with ConGenOff at a reception sponsored by Post, Bilal K. Sasso, head of protocol and public relations at the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), attributed the recent but feeble attempt to rejuvenate the Israel Boycott Office to pressure from the Libyan and Syrian governments. Sasso, who is Lebanese, said that the OIC member states' representatives had held only a handful of meetings relating to the boycott in the first 20 years of the Office's existence.

[1](#)2. (C) It was not until Libyan and Syrian pressure to strengthen inter-member cooperation on the issue arose three years ago that annual meetings have since been held. According to Sasso, the OIC and the majority of its member states remain reluctant to make the boycott a priority. As evidence of this, Sasso claimed that the OIC did not send a single representative to the last Arab League boycott meeting in Damascus because it "was not worth the expense of paying for someone to attend." He further indicated that OIC High Commissioner of the Islamic Boycott Salem Al Honi's interest is lukewarm, though as a Libyan he is obligated to promote his country's official position in public.

[1](#)3. (C) By contrast, Sasso emphasized that the OIC considered the expansion of contact with the USG a high priority and enthusiastically offered to arrange meetings between consulate staff and the OIC's incoming director general and head of political affairs.  
Morales